

# MODIFYING DEBATE AS A TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE THE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL

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## Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana siswa menerapkan setiap langkah kegiatan menggunakan *modified and non-modified* debat. Dalam penelitian ini, metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif. Peneliti menggunakan dua kelas, yakni eksperimental dan kontrol di mana kelas eksperimental menggunakan *modified debate* dan kelas kontrol menggunakan *non-modified debate*. Untuk mendapatkan data, peneliti menggunakan observasi yang berhubungan dengan kebutuhan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada tiga tahap di mana siswa mempunyai masalah di kelas *modified debate*, dalam proses belajar mengajar, memperkenalkan topic, dan durasi waktu, dan ada dua tahap di mana siswa mempunyai masalah di kelas *non-modified debate*, proses belajar mengajar dan durasi waktu. Dapat disarankan bahwa siswa harus diberikan kesempatan berbicara untuk mencapai suatu tujuan. Dengan latihan, siswa dapat mengembangkan kemampuan berbicara karena tujuan berbicara adalah untuk berkomunikasi.

This study aimed to find out how the students applied every step of modified and non-modified debate activities. In this research, the method was qualitative design. The research was conducted at the senior high school. The researcher used two classes, experimental and control groups in which experimental group used modified debate and control group used non-modified debate. To get the data, the researcher used observation sheet related to students' need. The findings revealed that, in modified debate, there were three steps in which the students had a problem in modified debate and there were two steps in which the students had a problem in non-modified debate. They were in teaching learning process, introducing the topic, and keep track of time. It is suggested that to reach a goal in speaking, the students have to be given opportunity to speak. With practicing, the learners can explore their speaking skill since the goal of speaking is to communicate.

**Key words:** modified debate, non-modified debate, speaking skill

## **INTRODUCTION**

Students learn four skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing, at school. If they are asked which one they have difficulty to perform, their answer might be speaking is usually hardest to perform. When they will call to perform in front of class or teacher asks directly to the students, they are usually silent and afraid to speak something and answer the question from the teacher.

According to Khotimah (2014:51), making students speak English is a difficult job for English teachers. It needs a long process of practice and learning. She also points out that students of foreign language learners see that their native language is completely different from English while an opportunity to learn English and practice it in their real life is very limited in time and space. Therefore, they need more practice to speak English. To be able to produce, students need to be sufficiently equipped with vocabulary, grammar, general knowledge and speaking strategies. In receptive skills – listening and reading- students are to receive, to absorb, and to understand. But in productive skills, in this case speaking, they have to express ideas, to communicate directly.

Mart (2012:91) defines speaking as being capable of speech, expressing or exchanging thoughts through using language. Meanwhile, Somjai and Jansem (2015:29) defines speaking is interaction between speakers with a listener. They also added that speaking has been defined as making use of words in an ordinary voice. Gani, Fajrina, and Hanifa (2015:20) defines speaking skill is an ability to orally express opinions, thoughts, facts, and feelings to other people. They also state that the students learn how to organize ideas, arrange sentences, and express language in spoken form with good pronunciation and comprehensible language. According to Muslichatun (2013:23), speaking skill is one of the productive skill of language learning. She also added that speaking skill is very

important to attention to the attainment of this skill as by speaking people can communicate with other people.

Madsa (2014:4) states that there are two factors to affect the students' speaking skill, one is fail to find suitable words to express themselves and the other is they are afraid of making mistakes. Considering the problem of Madsa, debate is one of ways to conduct their speaking. Debate is an easy way to integrate content, language, and strategy objectives, and that students develop an increased motivation and engagement with the content. Zare and Othman (2013:1506) state that debate has the potential to improve speaking ability, since the activity requires a lot of speaking practices and verbal discussions among debaters.

On the other hand, in this research, the researcher finds that the original debate still has weaknesses. The Asian-Australian Parliamentary debate in which the researcher chooses in the research does not give opportunity for the students to speak first. It is similar with the Alasmari and Ahmed study, the students only practice their debate. The students practice to give the argument and idea with the topic which is given by the teacher. In fact, the students still have a lack ability to speak. Moreover, the students are not given informal topic that can help the students to share their experience in their life. The opinion's students for determining the topic can motivate the students to speak.

From the problem above, the researcher develops the debate in teaching learning process. The researcher modifies the debate with assuming that the students can speak first using the free theme. In this research, the researcher modifies the Verner's debate design. The modified was that the researcher gives practiced to speak freely for the students. Then, the topic was determined based on the students' want and the longer time was given to search the issue.

Based on the explanation stated above, the researcher formulated the problem as follows:

1. To find out how the students apply every step of modified design and non-modified design of debate activities?

## **METHOD**

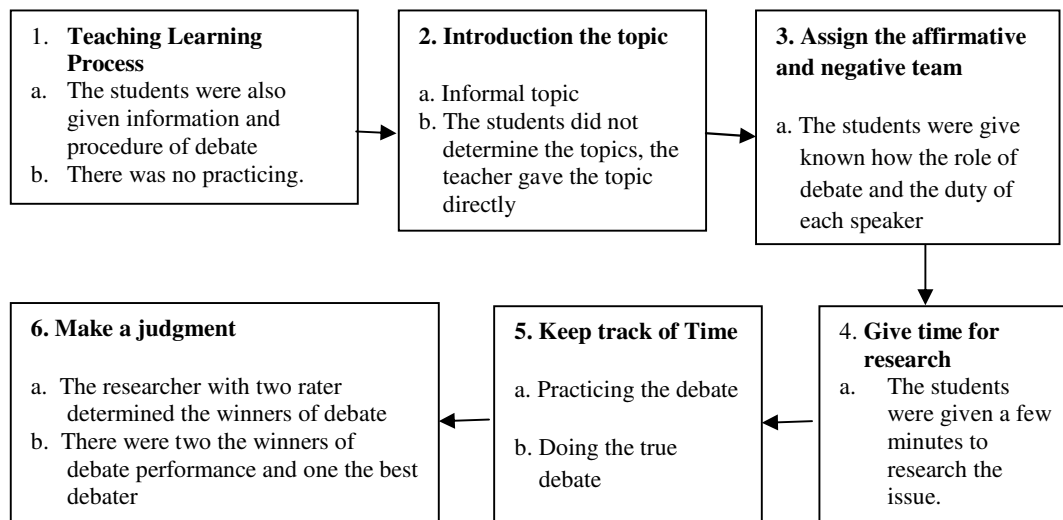
The study used qualitative design. The researcher used true-experimental design. The research was conducted at the second year of SMA N 2 Metro, Lampung on September to October 2015. This researcher used two classes in which first class was experimental group and the second class was control group. The experimental used modified debate and control group used non-modified debate. Each group consisted of 26 students.

In order to collecting the data, the researcher used observation. The observation was employed during the implementation of debate in the classroom. It was aimed to know the way teacher implements debate in the classroom. In addition, it also aimed to know what problems students face in learning process. In observation, the writer used observation sheet to know the activity of students in learning process. The researcher used the blank observation sheet and wrote down all the activity in learning process. The researcher focused on the response of the students when they are learning English using debate as a technique.

## **RESULTS**

In this research, the two debate design was used. The researcher used modified debate and non-modified debate. The first question is answered by seeing the diagrams below:

**Diagram 1. Non-modified Debate Design**



*(Asian-Australian Parliamentary Debate; Verner's design)*

From the diagram above, the activity of the students can be depicted below:

### **1. Teaching Learning Process**

In modified debate class, the students were not given opportunity to speak first. They only gave information and procedure of debate. The video of true debate was showed to make the students know directly how to perform debate. To know the students' knowledge, the researcher asked the students to give opinion about the debate. Unfortunately, there was no students answered the question. They were only silent. Then, there was a student said that '*kalau salah gak apa-apa ya bu*'. Knowing the students' feeling, the researcher told them to be brave to speak without afraid to make mistake.

### **2. Introducing the Topic**

After 2 meetings, the students were asked to perform the debate. The first thing that the students do was to determine the topic. In non-modified debate design, the students did not determine the topic but the topic was determined by the researcher

directly at the same time in debate performance. The topics were; 1) Having a love relationship is more important than a close friend, 2) Female are better than male, 3) Fashion is needed at school, and 4) It is not important to keep in touch with our ex-boyfriend/girlfriend.

### **3. Assign the Affirmative and Negative Team**

After determining the topic, the students were divided into four teams in which each time was divided into two groups. In a team, the affirmative and negative teams were created. First group was the affirmative team, and second group was the negative team. The affirmative was where the group agreed with the issue. In other hand, the negative team was where the group disagreed with the issue. A group consisted of three speakers. Every speaker was given two minutes in performing. In debate performance, the debate was opened by the moderator and the timer reminded the speaker about the time. The researcher determined who became the moderator and timer in each team. The two adjudicators gave a score for each group.

### **4. Give Time for Research**

In non-modified debate, the students were given time to search the issue only 15 minutes. After that, each group performed the debate. Each group prepared their self by making a note in paper.

### **5. Keep Track of Time**

In this part was the important thing in debate performance. Similar to modified debate class, the students had not been already to perform the true debate since debate was still new and they had ever performed before. To solve the problem, the researcher gave the same opportunity to the students to practice first. The, the students practice the debate and learn how to do the debate. They also learned how to defend and build the issue. In practicing the debate, the students still had

weaknesses. They only gave opinion but they had not been able to break the opponents' issue and attack the issue to defend their issue. There for, the researcher trained them how to do debate well.

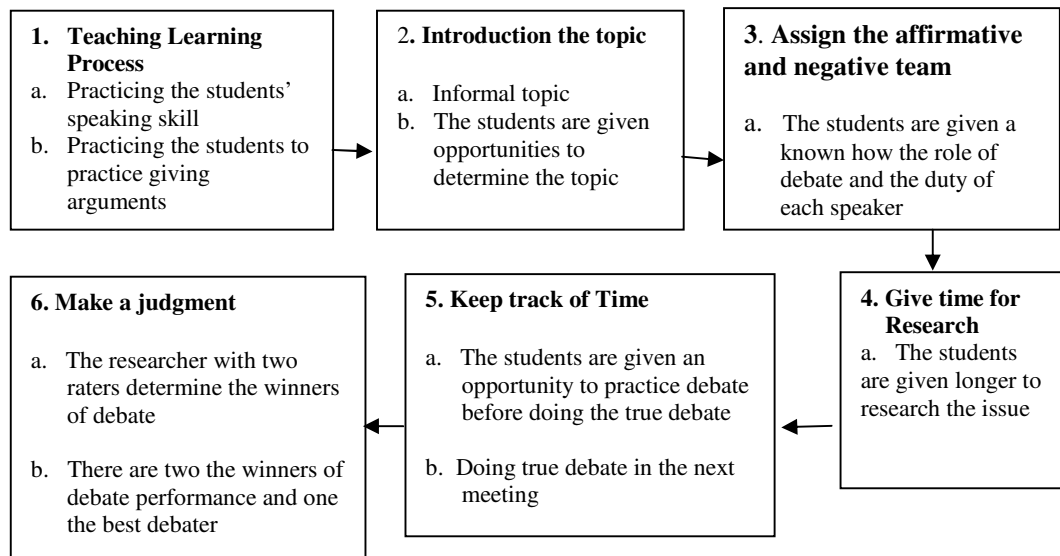
In the next meeting, the students did the true debate. They seemed to be more ready than in practicing debate. It could be seen in their performance. Although they still had weaknesses, the debate ran better than in practicing. The debate was opened by the moderator well. Then, the speakers presented their case. The affirmative group received two minutes to present their case to the audience. The negative group then received two minutes to present their case. After the two speakers from each group presented, both groups gave an attack to defend their issue. Unfortunately, the speaker had not shown the best performance. The speaker did not give and develop a strong arguing. Most of them only maintained their issue with adding opinion. The pauses were still done by the speaker. Some of speaker were silent and could not continue their explanation. Then, the last to speak, both of groups presented their rebuttal and summary for two minutes.

## **6. Make a Judgment**

This step was the final judgment where the students wanted to know who were the winner and the best debater. The winner was the one who had presented the strongest case. Before the researcher announced the winner, the researcher told them that the important things in debate performance that all of the students could speak without afraid to make mistake. The students could also practice their fluency and comprehending. The last, the researcher announced the winner and best debater based on the inter-raters score.

Besides that, the activity of modified debate can be seen in diagram below:

**Diagram 2. Modified Design of Debate**



*(Modified design of debate by the researcher)*

Diagram above, it can be seen that the activity was different from non-modified debate.

The activity can be seen below:

### **1. Teaching Learning Process**

In modified debate class, the students were given opportunity to speak first. The students spoke freely based on a word from the researcher. However, the students had a difficulty to speak. Some of them were silent when the researcher asked them to make utterance and some of them made many pauses. The students also said “*Kalau salah jangan di hukum ya bu*”. Then, the researcher gave explanation about the goal in teaching learning process and told them that there was no mistake in speaking. Thereafter, the students seemed braver to make utterance.

After 2 meetings, the students also were given opportunity to give opinion or share idea based on the topic by the researcher. The researcher gave hot issue in around the students. The students were asked to build the issue and learned how to defend and attack the issue. The students seemed enthusiastic. Almost the students raised their hand by giving argument and even share their true experience.



## **2. Introducing the Topic**

After 4 meetings, the students were asked to perform the debate. The first thing that the students do was to determine the topic. In this opportunity, the researcher did not determine the topic, but the researcher asked the students what topics the students liked. The students seemed happy since they could determine the topic. One by one the students gave the topic and the researcher wrote down on the white board. Finally, the four topics had been determined. The students seemed agree by applause likes a sign that they were really happy with the topic. It was also showed when some of the students said 'pengalaman pribadi bu'. The four topics were; 1) Having a love relationship is more important than a close friend, 2) Female are better than male, 3) fashion is needed at school, and 4) it is not important to keep in touch with our ex-boyfriend/girlfriend.

## **3. Assign the Affirmative and Negative Team**

After determining the topic, the students were divided into four teams in which each time was divided into two groups. In a team, the affirmative and negative teams were created. First group was the affirmative team, and second group was the negative team. The affirmative was where the group agreed with the issue. In other hand, the negative team was where the group disagreed with the issue. A group consisted of three speakers. Every speaker was given two minutes in performing. In debate performance, the debate was opened by the moderator and the timer reminded the speaker about the time. The researcher determined who became the moderator and timer in each team. The two adjudicators gave a score for each group.

## **4. Give Time for Research**

Determining the topic and the affirmative and negative team were done. After that the students were given time to research the issue. In modified debate, the time was longer than the original one. The students could search the issue until the next

meeting that was the debate performance. The students also made a preparation and strategy to do the best in debate performance.

## **5. Keep Track of Time**

In this part was the important thing in debate performance. Unfortunately, the students had been ready to perform the true debate since debate was still new and they had ever performed before. To solve the problem, the researcher gave opportunity to the students to practice first. The, the students practice the debate and learn how to do the debate. They also learned how to defend and build the issue. In practicing the debate, the students still had weaknesses. They only gave opinion but they had not been able to break the opponents' issue and attack the issue to defend their issue. There for, the researcher trained them how to do debate well.

In next meeting, the students did the true debate. They seemed to be more ready than in practicing debate. It could be seen in their performance. The debate was opened by the moderator well. Then, the speakers presented their case fluently. The affirmative group received two minutes to present their case to the audience. The negative group then received two minutes to present their case. After the two speakers from each group presented, both groups gave an attack to defend their issue. The each group showed their best team to be a winner. Then, the last to speak, both of groups presented their rebuttal and summary for two minutes.

## **6. Make a Judgment**

This step was the final judgment where the students wanted to know who were the winner and the best debater. The winner was the one who had presented the strongest case. Before the researcher announced the winner, the researcher told them that the important things in debate performance that all of the students could speak without afraid to make mistake. The students could also practice their fluency and

comprehending. The last, the researcher announced the winner and best debater based on the inter-raters score.

## **DISCUSSION**

In first finding, there are two important findings from the result of the students' activity in applying the steps of modified debate and non-modified debate. First one is there are three steps in modified debate that the students have a problem. They are in teaching learning process, introducing the topic and keep track of time. Second one, there are two steps in non-modified debate that the students have a problem. They are in teaching learning process and keep track of time.

In teaching learning, both of the students in modified debate and non-modified debate seemed to be afraid of speaking. They could not speak since they were afraid to make mistake. To solve the problem, the researcher gave pay attention to them to solve the problem. According to Mayeroff in Garza et al (2014:2), caring is about the journey that is advanced for the travelers through mutual interaction. This process involves knowing the individual and understanding his needs rather than generalizing what he may need. This means that teachers must consciously know their students and care for them in a culturally responsive way because students' perceptions about their teachers as caring or noncaring influence how they interact at school. Cultivating caring relationships with students foster engagement in school and promote learning.

Besides that, introducing the topic has obstacle in modified debate. Since the researcher want to know the opinion of the students about what they want, the students' were asked to determine what topic they want to discuss. The researcher gave solution to make the students easier reach the issue and can add the issue based on their knowledge and experience. Dalton (1951:432), we try to give children as much freedom as possible, and we encourage them to share their experiences. It emphasizes that modified design is an

effort to put the students' insights in the teaching and learning of foreign language. It also assumes that by using modified design can be a response of the language learners' problem to provide the conditions for the learners to acquire a language and it is also involved in learning to communicate with other people.

The third finding is keep track of time. Both modified debate and non-modified debate had its own problem. The students had not been ready to perform the true debate. To solve the problem, the researcher trains to the students to practice earlier before performing the true debate. The researcher helped the students to give the role how the students build the issue and attach the issue. It really helps the students to explore their skill to know the debate performance. Davidson in Krieger (2005) reveals that with practice, many students had obvious progress in their ability to express and defend ideas in debate and they often quickly recognized the flaws in each other's arguments. Darby (2007:2) says that debates offer the opportunity to practice analytical and communication skills and debating is an effective pedagogical strategy. This is a single practice where students need to use all English skills along with skills in delivery, presentation and vocabulary building.

Considering the problem above, modified debate is the better way to solve the students' problem. Giving opportunity to speak freely is one of the ways to solve the students' difficulty. Knowing the students want and need is our focus to make good relationship and longer time can give the students enough time to explore their knowledge.

## **CONCLUSSIONS AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the finding, it can be concluded that the students still had the problem in teaching learning process both modified debate and non-modified debate. Especially in speaking, the students were still afraid to speak since they were afraid to make a mistake. To solve the problem, the researcher gave the way to

solve the students' problem. First one is by practicing since speaking becomes a habit for the students since they get the practice every day to improve their speaking skill. Selecting the topic also make the students improve their speaking skill. If the students can determine the topic that they want, they can explore easier they knowledge. It can make the students have an opportunity to improve their speaking by knowing what the topic that they want to discuss. Considering the time is also one of the important to the teacher in improving the students' speaking skill. While, the students have longer time to prepare their self to understand the topic and they can practice maximally to get the best performance. It can be concluded that debate can improve the students' speaking skill.

It suggested for the teacher to implement the technique considering the students need. Giving more practical to speak is better to improve the students' speaking skill.

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